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## CO-OPERATION BETWEEN THE NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION AND THE NATIONAL SOCIETY FOR THE PROMOTION OF INDUSTRIAL EDUCATION

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Unusual activity among all forces, the state, the church, the school, the social worker, the labor organization, the employer, for the improvement of social and economic conditions, marks this as a period of especial significance. In many places have been organized efficiency committees, bureaus of municipal research, bureaus of child labor, bureaus of health, commissions of inquiry, both state and national, whose duty or aim is to investigate actual conditions and later to suggest remedies which make for the betterment of human welfare. So general are the organizations and so closely related are the problems that there is a constant overlapping of the work of one body upon the work of another. It would appear that such interweaving would result sometimes both in confusion and failure of achievement. It were fitting then that this society, organized for a definite end, with practical men in charge, should take the initiative in an attempt at co-ordination of effort among some of these forces. It is with that end in view that this topic has been given a place on your program.

In this discussion there has been set up: First, The general proposition that the N.E.A. is entering upon a new era of usefulness by attacking concrete problems; second, That the most effective work in the accomplishment of vocational education can be brought about by a co-ordination and uniting of forces interested in the promotion of such education; third, That the N.E.A. Committee on Vocational Education recognizes the service already rendered by the National Society in carrying forward this work; fourth, A definite program of co-operation for a unification of effort of the National Society and the Special Committee of the N.E.A. This

program is to consist, first, of an agreement as to definitions, second, of an acceptance of certain definite principles and policies, third, of a pronouncement upon debatable issues, and, finally of an interchange of ideas and reports which shall be of mutual advantage to this society and to the Vocational Committee and thence to the cause of vocational education.

Among the organizations for the promotion of the general good, few if any, antedate that known as the National Education Association. Few, if any, have so persistently pursued the same phantom unabated, sometimes with results remarkable in breadth and application and sometimes equally remarkable in their narrowness and failure to meet the concrete application to the real problem of life. Facing the facts squarely, the N.E.A. has been, and must continue to be, a real force in the social and economic welfare of this country. It is the one organization in which the people at large have confidence, for it is the one institution representing the public school in the broadest sense of that term. However much internal dissension it may have had, however much derision and abuse may be heaped upon it, it still is an organization of the great army of teachers of the public schools of this country. These teachers and the public-school systems from which they come are nearer to the interests of all the people than any other institution in our republic. Again, these same public-school systems have usually served as the type or pattern for the organization of any form of vocational education. Is it not then profitable for the National Society for the Promotion of Industrial Education to devise ways and means by which it may come into closer contact with the more inclusive and more widely accepted organization, the N.E.A.?

In any analysis of the numerous social activities we are no doubt agreed that they are but an indication of the spirit of the people of a democracy to bear their share of the responsibility in the settlement of national, state, and municipal problems. In the assumption of this responsibility there may be more or less of selfishness and greed and a vague hope of securing that which will enable each to enjoy as much of luxury as his neighbor. The fact remains, whether as a result of conditions or temperament, that an

unrest exists. Far be it from me to say that vocational education alone can solve the problem, that vocational guidance can do more than help, that academic or cultural education is the solution. That a perfect code of eugenic laws, or perfect regulation of child labor, or any other of the long list of welfare movements will eradicate this unrest. Rather will it be lessened when all of these forces unite through some central clearing-house, toward the one end of sensible, humane lives for all the people. At present to what institution can we better look than to the public school, enlarged to include all types of education from professional to vocational and backed by all the moral, social, and economic organizations for the amelioration of this unrest?

The N.E.A., representing as it does nearly all sides of the educational field, from the university to the kindergarten, and from philosophic reasoning to the concrete application of theories to everyday practice, for many years has been considering some of the questions which confront this society. The difficulty has been not so much in the desire or sincerity of the persons interested in the movement as in the acceptance of the doctrines, theories, and reasoning which formed the background of their educational philosophy.

When we realize that it is scarcely thirty years since the faculty psychology was the most as well as the best we had, we have some conception of the limitations of some of our educational traditions. These traditions have had, and in many cases continue to have, their effect upon present-day curricula. It is little wonder that manual training with wide general aims failed to function as a practical introduction to the manual occupations. It was heresy to think that through it a person could be trained for any practical job. It was the old story of "turning molasses into a barrel and expecting to draw from the spigot grape juice" or any other equally harmless concoction which might satisfy the fancy of the individual.

However, the N.E.A. from time to time has undertaken constructive work. Accumulative experience has rendered some of these beginnings of less value to us than to the generation in which they had their inception. Nevertheless, the fact remains, that the report of the Committee of Fifteen, the report of the Committee of Ten, and the later reports of the Committee on the Place of

Industries in Public Education, the report of the Committee on Uniform Method of Keeping School Records, and the more recent work of the Committees on the Articulation of the High School and College, and the Committee on Standards have had a more or less far-reaching effect upon the work of the public school. True it is, however, that on the one hand the N.E.A., either through intent or oversight, has failed usually to secure the assistance of others than educators for this work. On the other hand, the National Society for the Promotion of Industrial Education, consciously, no doubt, has made this co-operation one of its working policies. The neglect of this necessary co-operation frequently caused the work of the Association to fall short of its possibilities. This again has caused disinterested persons as well as persons with a grievance to point sneeringly to the weakness without suggesting a possible remedy. That the N.E.A. is itself conscious of the condition and is seeking a constructive program, is more and more in evidence at each succeeding meeting. More especially is this true of the Department of Superintendence, where such practical topics as Scientific Management in Education and those other unpedantic and commonplace subjects, such as Team Play, are being discussed. This was again illustrated by the adoption of resolutions in Chicago, 1912, asking for the appointment of a committee consisting of school men, labor men, social-welfare workers, and employers to investigate the question of vocational education.

In the variety of interests represented, this Vocational Education Committee was very unlike committees previously appointed by the N.E.A. When we realize further that many of the members of this committee are active workers in the National Society, we can begin at least to feel that the N.E.A. is after all somewhat alive to the modern trend in educational endeavor. Nor is this all. At the time of the presentation of the preliminary report of this committee at the Salt Lake City meeting last July, a movement was inaugurated which is almost sure to result in a change of name of one of the large departments of the N.E.A. It is proposed that the department hitherto known as the Department of Manual Training and Art shall hereafter be known as the Department of Vocational Education and Manual or Practical Arts.

Since this spirit of progress has manifested itself in the N.E.A., the time would seem opportune for the establishment of more intimate relations between this society and the N.E.A. By this means may be effected an actual saving of effort in the study of concrete problems. This committee of the N.E.A., on Vocational Education and Vocational Guidance, which is meeting here this week has for its task the consideration of Vocational Education in Part Time and Continuation Schools for those persons between the ages of fourteen and eighteen years. It is proposed by this committee to prepare a handbook which shall be useful to those who wish to undertake some phase of this particular form of vocational education. This committee through a subcommittee will also consider the question of Vocational Guidance. In the work of this committee the co-operation and support of this society are needed, nor are we entirely without a definite suggestion for that co-operation.

Among others of the prominent committees of the National Education Association at the present time is one called the Committee on Grammatical Nomenclature. This committee specifically states that its aim is to establish terms and definitions which shall be acceptable to all grammarians. In fact, this committee wishes to extend these definitions until they become international. No one realizes better than those of us who have had actual experience in the field of vocational education that here too there is a babble of tongues. The "Tower of Babel" itself is no more noted for its confusion than are the definitions and meanings which consciously and unconsciously are given the terms concerning vocational education. To be sure these definitions cannot be permanently established by fiat; nevertheless some of them are becoming fixed by usage. How many of us are agreed upon the definition of pre-vocational education? To some it may mean any education which precedes education for a specific end; to others it may mean only that education which immediately precedes the vocation; while to still others it may mean an education which shall give the youth an acquaintance with several occupations at the same time that he is acquiring the necessary three R's. The need is apparent. Hence our first proposition is the granting

by the National Society for the Promotion of Industrial Education to the N.E.A. the use of such definitions as are becoming fixed and have been made by this society and the authorization of such members of this society as are members of the N.E.A. committee to unite with the N.E.A. in attempting to determine upon fairly permanent definitions. Among its other duties, this committee purposes to confer with the Bureau of Education, the Bureau of Labor, the state boards of education, with manufacturers' associations, with labor organizations, and other interested societies for the purpose of arriving at a common meaning and definition of terms, to the end that these several organizations shall adopt these terms as definitions for their general use in connection with vocational education.

This whole movement of vocational education must have as a secondary result some influence upon the ordinary schoolroom routine. The permanency and general value of that influence will depend largely upon the fundamental principles which form the foundation of this work. Hence, as a second opportunity for co-operation, may we not set up that of a preparation and acceptance of a somewhat uniform code of principles and policies which should govern the introduction of vocational education into any school system, showing also its relation to present general education. Those already set up by this society for state systems and for policies in teacher-training may well form the basis for this new code. New experiences and a wider acquaintance with the actual conditions will no doubt compel us from time to time to modify this code. Nor should this prevent our real purpose of preparing a statement of what we believe to be a sound basis for the establishment of this work in any community.

In the preparation of any handbook upon this question, there constantly arises the necessity for a decision upon some debatable issue. In the actual undertaking of the work of vocational education, these issues are to a greater or lesser degree determined by local conditions. Some of these issues, as unit or dual control, the types of vocational education which are possible, the short unit course versus the balanced course, have not yet been agreed upon with sufficient unanimity to actually make effective a statement

made by our committee alone. To be sure some of these issues are agitating communities which are anxious to establish some form of vocational education. In fact there seems to be a wide divergence of opinion in regard to many of these questions. It would seem then one of the most valuable offices which this vocational committee could perform, would be a settlement of its opinion regarding some of these most pressing issues. With that in mind, a third opportunity for co-operation between the National Society for the Promotion of Industrial Education and the committee of the N.E.A., may well be a pronouncement upon these issues which shall carry with it the strength of both organizations. While such a pronouncement may not be generally accepted, it will furnish the basis for intelligent discussion and open the way for actual profit by experiment of the procedure involved.

As indicated in the resolutions of the N.E.A., the work of this committee was to be concerned chiefly with young persons between the ages of fourteen and eighteen years of age. The vocational education assigned for consideration by this committee is more particularly part-time and continuation-school work for persons of this age. There is however, a large field of pre-vocational education and later trade education which still remains to be considered. That this pre-vocational education should be made a definite part of the accepted school curricula for the upper grammar grades is gaining wider acceptance constantly. There are, however, young men and young women who are desirous of pursuing a trade education beyond the age of eighteen years. These persons may be those who are already at work and have tried to supplement their knowledge by utilizing the correspondence school, they may belong to that class of young people who left school before they actually knew their own desires, or they may be those who realize that they want and need only an opportunity. It would seem that this society could well supplement the work of the committee of the N.E.A. by a bulletin upon this latter type of education, including in such bulletin the need for such instruction, the agencies at work to provide it, and the conditions under which a community would be justified in undertaking it. As to pre-vocational education it may well be left to a subsequent committee of the N.E.A., inasmuch



as it is more general in its nature, and correlates more closely with the work of the present-day school.

Another very important service which could be rendered this committee by the National Society would be the making available to our use much of the material regarding schools established, legislation accomplished, legislation proposed, etc., for the work under our consideration. It is not the desire of this committee to supersede or appropriate the splendid work already accomplished by this National Society. It is rather our purpose to survey the field and to tell those for whom our handbook is intended the source of needed information. We have no inclination to fall into the error of adding to the present extensive duplication of effort but rather to put our energy into the preparation of a useful handbook from which all interested in this work may find that definite help which they so much need during this constructive period. To avoid such duplication of effort, we invite the co-operation and assistance of the National Society in our efforts to present a report, and through it a program, which shall be at once helpful and authoritative.

In conclusion, may we express the belief that in the not distant future what has been an agitation and source of discussion concerning vocational education during the past ten years, will in the next decade become crystallized and generally accepted as fact and necessity. So much so that the several states and municipalities will consider vocational education one of the most useful parts of their educational program. Such a reality is possible only through the united effort of all interested parties, social workers, educators, employers, and employees. To this end should the National Society for the Promotion of Industrial Education, representing as it does the layman, both employer and employee, and the older organization, the National Education Association, representing the public school, unite for the purpose of making such education most effective.